

REMARKS

Claims 4, 7, 15 and 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. This objection is overcome by amendment to claims 1, 7, 12 and 18. Therefore, claims 1, 3, 5, 7-13, 16 and 18-20 are submitted to be allowable for at least these reasons.

Claims 1, 6, 8-14, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by *Watts Jr., et al.* (U.S. 6,295,197). Applicants traverse this rejection on the grounds that this reference is defective in supporting a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 in view of the amendments to claims 1 and 12 as set forth above.

The PTO provides in MPEP §2131..."To anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim...". Therefore, to sustain this rejection *Watts Jr., et al.* reference must contain all of the claimed elements of independent claims 1 and 12. However, the invention as claimed, is not shown or taught in this reference. Therefore, the rejection is unsupported by the art and should be withdrawn.

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. V. Union Oil Co. Of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987)." "The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as contained in the ...claim." *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

Therefore, independent claims 1 and 12 and claims dependent therefrom are not anticipated by the cited art and are therefore submitted to be allowable.

Claims 2, 3, 5, 16 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Watts Jr., et al.* (U.S. 6,256,318) in view of *O'Callaghan, et al.* (U.S. 6,256,318). Applicants traverse this rejection on the grounds that these references are defective in establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness in view of the amendments set forth above inasmuch as these claims depend from allowable claims.

As the PTO recognizes in MPEP § 2142:

...The Examiner bears the initial burden of factually supporting any *prima facie* conclusion of obviousness. If the Examiner does not produce a *prima facie* case, the Applicant is under no obligation to submit evidence of nonobviousness....the Examiner must step backward in time and into the shoes worn by the hypothetical 'person of ordinary skill in the art' when the invention was unknown and just before it was made....The Examiner must put aside knowledge of the Applicant's disclosure, refrain from using hindsight, and consider the subject matter claimed 'as a whole.'"

The combined references fail to teach or suggest the claimed combination.

Therefore, there is simply no basis in the art for combining the references to support a 35 U.S.C. §103 rejection because neither of the references teach or even suggest the desirability of the combination. Moreover, neither of the references provide any incentive or motivation in supporting the desirability of the combination.

The MPEP §2143.01 provides:

The mere fact that references can be combined or modified does not render the resultant combination obvious unless the prior art also suggests the desirability of the combination. *In re Mills*, 916 F.2d 680, 16 USPQ2d 1430 (Fed. Cir. 1990).

Therefore, the Examiner's combination arises solely from hindsight based on the invention without any showing of suggestion, incentive or motivation in either reference for the combination.

Thus, the Examiner's burden of factually supporting a *prima facie* case of obviousness has clearly not been met.

The Federal Circuit has, on many occasions, held that there was no basis for combining references to support a 35 U.S.C. §103 rejection. For example, in *In re Geiger*, the court stated in holding that the PTO "failed to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness":

Obviousness cannot be established by combining the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention, absent some teaching, suggestion or incentive supporting the combination. *ACS Hospital Systems, Inc. v. Monteffiore Hospital*, 732 F.2d 1572, 1577, 221 USPQ 929, 933 (Fed. Cir. 1984).

The Federal Circuit has also repeatedly warned against using the applicant's disclosure as a blueprint to reconstruct the claimed invention out of isolated teachings in the prior art. See, e.g., *Grain Processing Corp. v. American Maize-Products*, 840 F.2d 902, 907, 5 USPQ2d 1798, 1792 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

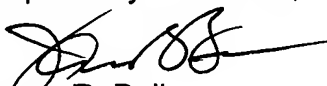
More recently, the Federal Circuit found motivation absent in *In re Rouffet*, 149 F.3d 1350, 47 USPQ2d 1453 (Fed. Cir. 1998). In this case, the court concluded that the board had "reversibly erred in determining that one of [ordinary] skill in the art would have been motivated to combine these references in a manner that rendered the claimed invention [to have been] obvious." The court noted that to "prevent the use of hindsight based on the invention to defeat patentability of the invention, this court requires the examiner to show a motivation to combine the references that create the case of obviousness." The court further noted that there

were three possible sources for such motivation, namely "(1) the nature of the problem to be solved; (2) the teachings of the prior art; and (3) the knowledge of persons of ordinary skill in the art." Here, according to the court, the board had relied simply upon "the high level of skill in the art to provide the necessary motivation," without explaining what specific understanding or technological principle within the knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art would have suggested the combination. Notably, the court wrote: "If such a rote invocation could suffice to supply a motivation to combine, the more sophisticated scientific fields would rarely, if ever, experience a patentable technical advance."

Therefore, independent claims 1, 7, 12 and 18 and the claims dependent therefrom are submitted to be allowable.

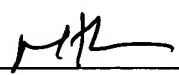
In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 3, 5, 7-12, 18, 19 and 20 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, an early Notice of Allowance is courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,


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